

NH ROUTE 28 – Wolfeboro, NH

Project #29615

Public Involvement Plan



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Adopted:

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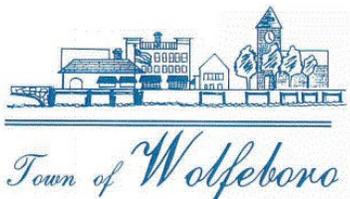


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1.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

1.1 Purpose of Public Involvement Plan

The purpose of this Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is to describe a wide range of public outreach activities that will be implemented as part of the Wolfeboro 29615 – NH Route 28 project. This PIP will:

- Provide contact information for the Project Team;
- List project stakeholders;
- Explain the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) Project Development Process and the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) process that will be incorporated on the Wolfeboro project;
- Communicate upcoming meeting dates and overall project schedule;
- List and describe the anticipated communication products and methods;
- Keep all stakeholders and the public well informed of the project status and activities; and
- Provide timely, useful, current information through a variety of targeted means and methods.

This PIP will be revised periodically to reflect updates to the list of stakeholders, project meeting dates and locations, project schedule and other salient items that may change over the course of this multi-year project. This Plan will be considered a living document throughout the project.

1.2 Project Overview

The project is located in the Town of Wolfeboro between the intersections of Pleasant Valley Road and Center Street (Pickering Corner). The project was initiated through Regional Planning Commission and Town of Wolfeboro, and included in the State's Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025. Originally, the project was programmed to reconstruct NH Route 28 from the Alton Town Line to Pickering Corner. The scope of work to reconstruct NH Route 28, including sidewalks, drainage, landscaping and lighting, for the entire length is greater than the programmed funding. As a result the limits of work have been reduced from 3.2 miles to approximately 1.3 miles.

The Town of Wolfeboro has committed to the project resources through the facilitation of the *Route 28 Corridor Preliminary Project Planning Report*, July 2018, which builds on the *Corridor Overview Report for the NH Route 28 Corridor Improvements, Springfield Point Road to Elm Street*, December 2017. The effort implemented the Context Sensitive Solutions approach and engaged the public through six (6) forums, establishing Problem and Vision Statements, soliciting public input on the existing conditions, developing alternatives, and making recommendations for the corridor. With these efforts, the Town has completed the Planning phase, and the NHDOT will address the Preliminary Design, with an anticipated formal Public Hearing to be held in 2022, and follow the project through the NHDOT Project Development Process to Construction Advertisement. The start of construction, tentatively scheduled as early as 2024, will be based upon available funding and permitting and may span multiple construction seasons.

1.3 Project Team and Stakeholders

The project objectives will be achieved through collaboration with several key groups, including the Town of Wolfeboro, organizations, professionals and private citizens. The project will be led by NHDOT, with the primary point of contact for all inquiries being the NHDOT Project Manager, Don Lyford, P.E. The contact information for Mr. Lyford is listed below along with other key members of the NHDOT project team.

The project team consists of:

- The Project Lead Team (PLT);
- The Project Advisory Committee (PAC);

The Project Lead Team (PLT) consists of NHDOT staff and Town of Wolfeboro staff to facilitate the design process. Members of the PLT, including their role and affiliation are provided below.

PROJECT LEAD TEAM (PLT)			
NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	BUREAU, POSITION
Jason Ayotte	7 Hazen Drive, Concord	271-2165	Bureau of Highway Design, Project Manager
Leah Savage	7 Hazen Drive, Concord	271-1597	Bureau of Highway Design, Group Leader
Jon Hebert	7 Hazen Drive, Concord	271-6279	Bureau of Highway Design, Senior Design Engineer
Dave Ford	84 South Main Street, Wolfeboro	569-8176	Town of Wolfeboro, Director of Public Works
Tavis Austin	84 South Main Street, Wolfeboro	569-5970	Town of Wolfeboro, Director of Planning & Development
Gerald Fortin	5 Dartmouth Drive Suite 200, Auburn	770-5951	Stantec, Consultant Principal-in-Charge
Dave McNamara	5 Dartmouth Drive Suite 200, Auburn	263-4653	Stantec, Consultant Project Manager

The PAC will provide high-level input and guidance for the project bringing diverse perspectives and expertise, as well as connecting issues and opportunities for the project. The PAC can include both internal and external stakeholders.

PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE	
<u>Name</u>	<u>Representation</u>
Paul O'Brien	Town of Wolfeboro, Board of Selectmen
Linda Murray	Town of Wolfeboro, Board of Selectmen
James Pineo	Town of Wolfeboro, Town Manager
Peter Gilligan	Brewster Academy
Maryann Belanger	Governor Wentworth School District
David Lynch	Kingswood Golf Club
Susan Slack	Lakes Region Planning Commission
Jeremy Roberge, CEO	Huggins Hospital
Alan Hanscom	NHDOT District 3
Roger Murray	Citizen-At-Large
Bob Tougher	Citizen-At-Large
Cindy Melanson	Citizen-At-Large
Bob Leavy	Citizen-At-Large
Mary DeVries	Chamber of Commerce, Wolfeboro EDC
Kathy Barnard	Town of Wolfeboro, Planning Board Representative

2.0 PROJECT PROCESS

2.1 NHDOT Project Development Process

All NHDOT projects, including the Wolfeboro 29615 project, are developed through a seven-step project development process illustrated below.

- Project Scoping / Data Collection / Coordination
- Preliminary Engineering Studies / Environmental Evaluation

- Identification of Preferred Alternative / Draft Environmental Documentation
- Formal Public Hearing Process
- Selected Alternative / Final Environmental Documentation
- Final Design (Project Construction Plan Development) / Right-of-Way Acquisition
- Project Construction

This process is described in more detail in the ‘*Project Development - Making Transportation Projects a Reality*’ guide that is available on the Department’s website at the following link: <http://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/plans.htm> under the Citizens Guide to Transportation Series section. The CSS process seeks to gather critical community-level input into the first three phases of the project development process prior to identifying a “Preferred Alternative” for presentation, as well as requesting layout approval at the formal Public Hearing.

The Town underwent a Corridor Study and CSS Assessment that drafted problem and vision statements and prioritized improvements to the NH 28/NH 109 (Pickering Corner) intersection; roadway section improvements from Christian Ridge Road to Pickering Corner, and intersection improvements at McManus Road (High School Entrance) and Pleasant Valley Road. As a result the Town prepared a majority of the information associated with the Project Scoping, Data Collection, and initial coordination phases. The NHDOT will complete the Environmental Study as well as assess the alternative screening criteria developed. The aforementioned will be used in the development of project alternatives and identification of the preferred alternative, as well as in the environmental documentation for the project.

Once the “Preferred Alternative” has been identified and draft environmental document completed, a formal Public Hearing will be held to procure approval for the project’s layout. The Hearing will be overseen by a Hearing Commission that is comprised of three members appointed by the Governor and Executive Council, who are tasked with making a decision on the layout of the preferred alternative that has been identified for the project. At the Public Hearing, the Department will make a formal presentation and public testimony will be taken, recorded, and transcribed for the Hearing Commission to determine the occasion for the layout as presented. All issues and/or comments raised at the Public Hearing or during the hearing comment period will be documented and addressed in a report entitled the *Report of the Commissioner* (ROTC). The project team will coordinate with the PAC to help address each issue raised at the Hearing prior to the finalization of the ROTC. Should the Hearing Commission vote in favor of the project’s layout, then the project will advance to the Final Design / Right-of-Way Acquisition stage. The Public Hearing and subsequent layout approval represents a major milestone in the project development phase as it solidifies the major aspects and right-of- way requirements of the project’s design.

2.2 Principles of Context Sensitive Solutions

The Wolfeboro 29615 project will incorporate the principles of Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS). This is a process endorsed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and is defined by FHWA as “a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility.” A stakeholder is defined as a person or group affected by and/or with an interest in the outcome of the project. Stakeholders in the Wolfeboro 29615 project include:

- *Citizens who live, work and/or travel along NH Routes 28, and other ancillary roads connected to NH Route 28 in Wolfeboro;*
- *Municipal, regional, and state government elected and appointed officials;*
- *Groups with environmental, economic, or other concerns;*
- *Local utility companies;*
- *Resource agencies such as the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) and NH Division of Historical Resources (NHDHR);*
- *NH Department of Safety;*
- *Federal Highway Administration (FHWA); and the*
- *NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT).*

The CSS process has 15 guiding principles that have been divided into two groups: 1) Qualities of Excellence in Transportation Design and 2) Characteristics of the Process Contributing to Excellence (<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/csd/qualities.htm>). The 15 principles are listed below:

Qualities of Excellence in Transportation Design

1. The project satisfies the purpose and needs as agreed to by a full range of stakeholders. This agreement is forged in the earliest phase of the project and amended, as warranted, as the project develops.
2. The project is a safe facility for both the user and the community.
3. The project is in harmony with the community, and it preserves environmental, scenic, aesthetic, historic, and natural resource values of the area.
4. The project meets or exceeds the expectations of both designers and stakeholders and achieves a level of excellence in people's minds.
5. The project involves efficient and effective use of the resources (time, budget, community) of all involved parties.
6. The project is designed and built with minimal disruption to the community.
7. The project is seen as having added lasting value to the community.

Characteristics of the Process Contributing to Excellence

1. Communication with all stakeholders is open, honest, early, and continuous.
2. A multidisciplinary team is established early, with disciplines based on the needs of the specific project, and with the inclusion of the public.
3. A full range of stakeholders is involved with transportation officials in the scoping phase. The purposes of the project are clearly defined, and consensus on the scope is forged before proceeding.
4. The highway development process is tailored to meet the circumstances. This process should examine multiple alternatives that will result in a consensus of approach methods.
5. A commitment to the process from top agency officials and local leaders is secured.
6. The public involvement process, which includes informal meetings, is tailored to the project.
7. The landscape, the community, and valued resources are understood before engineering design is started.
8. A full range of tools for communication about project alternatives is used (e.g., visualization).

2.3 *Project Meetings*

The NHDOT will hold a series of meetings with local officials, public agencies, transportation and transit agencies, private transportation providers and other stakeholders. A formal Public Hearing will also be held to present the recommended alternative. The overall purpose of these meetings will include:

- Introducing the project;
- Disseminating information within the community and providing a setting for discussion and gathering feedback that will help form the alternatives and impacts;
- Presenting and describing the potential alternatives and associated impacts of each;
- Providing adequate opportunity for public comments and public involvement throughout the multi-year process; and
- Addressing concerns of the public, officials, agencies and stakeholders.

The meetings will be open to all members of the public and are anticipated to consist of the following, in these general categories:

- **Project Advisory Committee Meetings:** The PAC serves in an advisory role (tasked with making recommendations to the NHDOT) and is anticipated to be involved with the project from the project planning phase through the end of the project's design. This group is an extension of the Steering Committee previously formed for the Corridor Study. The focus of these meetings is to collect information, identify concerns and areas of interests, establish design controls, discuss detailed aspects of the project design solutions, and understand the specific needs of the Town.
- **Public Information Meetings:** The objective of public informational meetings is to review the problem and vision statements, review the rating criteria, and receive feedback on the project alternatives that are acceptable to the community and public at-large. The public informational meetings are intended to be an afternoon / evening session to discuss the various aspects of the project and gather input from the community regarding the alternatives that they feel will help to solve the project problems and needs and fit with the community's vision for the project. The meetings will be held during key project milestones. The meetings will be widely advertised within the community with notices posted in prominent public places, including local and regional newspapers, and on the Town of Wolfeboro website.
- **Neighborhood Stakeholder Meetings:** The objective of the neighborhood stakeholder meetings is to discuss and receive feedback on the project alternatives that may impact abutters or be a specific concern to stakeholders. The neighborhood stakeholder meetings are intended to be an afternoon / evening session with abutters to receive input and discuss opportunities prior to a Public Informational Meeting. The meeting invites will be letter invites, email, and may be advertised in public places within the neighborhood, as well as on the Town of Wolfeboro website.
- **Public Officials Meetings:** These meetings would be scheduled, as necessary, to inform the Town and State elected officials, municipal staff, the members of the Town boards, and other interested members of the public about the details of the project.

- **Public Hearing:** Once a Preferred Alternative has been identified for the project and the environmental documentation completed, a formal Public Hearing to secure layout approval for the project will be scheduled. The purpose of the Public Hearing is to inform the public of the design alternative that was selected for construction. This hearing serves to meet the requirements of the NHDOT public information process. The Hearing will be widely advertised within the community with notices posted in prominent public places and on the Town’s website. Hearing notices will also be advertised in several local and regional newspapers. Invitations will be sent by certified mail to all abutting property owners potentially directly impacted by the project. Invitations will also be sent to local, regional, and State Officials, as well as to environmental and other interest groups.
- The status and general timeframe of the anticipated public meetings are detailed below. Materials presented will be available on the project website.

Public Meetings		
Entity	Purpose	Date
Project Advisory Committee Meeting #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss Context Sensitive Solutions Approach and Process • Discuss Project Advisory Committee Roles and Responsibilities • Discuss Draft Public Involvement Plan • Review the developed Problem & Vision Statements 	December, 2019
Project Advisory Committee Meeting #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Public Involvement Plan, Project Advisory Committee Roles and Responsibilities • Project Review, Status, Schedule • Problem & Vision Statements from Corridor • Develop Purpose & Need/Alternative Rating Criteria 	July, 2021
Project Advisory Committee Meeting #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Existing Conditions, Design Controls, Interests, and Concerns • Recap 2018 Corridor Study Alternatives • Discuss initial Drainage and Traffic investigations • Overview of Alternative Rating Criteria • Review 2018 Corridor Study Alternatives • Develop Purpose & Need/Alternative Rating Criteria • Review Public Informational Meeting #1 Agenda 	September, 2021
Public Information Meeting #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present Problem & Vision Statements • Review Existing Conditions, Design Controls, Interests, and Concerns • Review 2018 Corridor Study Alternatives • Discuss Alternative Rating Criteria • Discuss Preliminary Alternatives & Investigations 	September/October, 2021

Public Meetings		
Project Advisory Committee Meeting #4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recap and Reactions of Public Information Meeting #1 Present and Receive Feedback on Design Alternatives 	November, 2021
Project Advisory Committee Meeting #5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Status of Design & Environmental Review Present and Receive Feedback on Design Alternatives 	February, 2022
Project Advisory Committee Meeting #6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Status of Design & Environmental Review Present and Receive Feedback on Design Alternatives 	May, 2022
Neighborhood Stakeholder Meetings, As Necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present and Receive Feedback on Design Alternatives for Pickering Corner with Town, Businesses and Brewster Academy Present and Receive Feedback on Design Alternatives for South Main Street from Pickering Corner to Pleasant Valley Rd? with School District, Golf Club, and Watershed Association 	May - July, 2022
Project Advisory Committee Meeting #6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update on Selected Alternative Review of Stakeholders Meetings, As Necessary Review Public Informational Meeting #2 Agenda 	July, 2022
Public Information Meeting #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present and Receive Feedback on Design Alternatives Discuss Preferred Alternative Call for Consensus on Preferred Alternative 	July/August, 2022
Project Advisory Committee Meeting #6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Update on Selected Alternative 	October, 2022
Public Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal Presentation of Project Design to the Public and Abutters 	November/December, 2022
Public Information Meeting/Public Official Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide project updates during Final Design and Construction 	TBD

2.4 Project Advisory Committee Guidelines and Procedures

The PAC has an important and challenging task of providing public input to the New Hampshire Department of Transportation in several important ways for the Wolfeboro 29615 NH Route 28 reconstruction: developing a statement of problems and needs, drafting a project vision statement, developing concepts to address the problems and needs to meet the vision, and advising the NHDOT on selecting a preferred alternative for the project design.

Because of the significance and complexity of the issues with which the PAC will be dealing, it is important to make the most effective use of our meeting times. Therefore, as a group, we commit to the following guidelines and procedures:

A. How we treat each other:

- Each member has an equal right to speak and ask questions. There are no “dumb questions.”
- Each member is encouraged to share individual viewpoints. Individual opinions are valid whether others agree with them or not.
- We will listen to, respect and seek to understand the views of others, particularly those perspectives that differ from our own.
- Disagreements will be explored not suppressed. In some instances, however, disagreements may be discussed outside of the PAC meetings so that we are not distracted from achieving the purpose of the meetings.
- We will be courteous when addressing other members, staff and consultants.
- We will refrain from interrupting each other, staff or consultants.
- We will keep our comments relevant to the topic under discussion.

B. How we make decisions:

- The PAC will operate by consensus whenever possible. Consensus does not necessarily mean agreement or active support by each member. Those not objecting are not necessarily indicating that they favor, but merely that they can “**live with it.**”
- In the absence of consensus, a super majority of three-quarters (75%) of the PAC members present is required for approval of an action.
- Participation in the decision-making of the PAC shall be limited to its members.
- In order to provide continuity in the group’s discussions, members are asked to make every effort to attend all meetings. However, if a member cannot attend, he or she may designate an alternate to attend and participate in discussions of the PAC in his or her absence.
- Non-members shall attend as observers and may be invited to offer comments, if time allows.

C. How we communicate with those outside the Project Advisory Committee:

- As it is NHDOT’s intent that the members of the PAC represent the interests of a wide cross-section of citizens who live and work in the project area, PAC members are encouraged to report on project issues to others who live and work in this area, particularly to groups or organizations to which they belong, and to bring input to PAC meetings that reflects the interests of these individuals and groups.
- It will be helpful if PAC members explain to others the process being used to develop the project concepts so they better understand how the project is progressing.

We believe that following these guidelines and procedures will help us to develop advice that is fully considered and will be well received by the NHDOT, the public, and the appropriate Federal, State, and local government leaders and agencies whose support is essential for carrying out our recommendations.

2.5 Project Schedule

The schedule is approximate and subject to change. The public meeting dates are provided in a general timeframe. This Plan will be updated as the project moves forward to reflect more specific dates.

	PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT	PROJECT DEVELOPMENT
2019	Project Advisory Committee Meetings (December)	Research Environmental Resources & Design Constraints
2020-2021	Project Advisory Committee Meetings Neighborhood Stakeholder Meetings Public Informational Meetings	Develop & Evaluate Design Alternatives Evaluate Environmental Impacts (wetlands, water quality, etc.)
2022/2023	Public Hearing	Publish Environmental Study
2023-2024	PAC & Public Official Meetings (Project Updates, As Needed)	Final Design Right-of-Way Acquisitions / Easements Environmental Permitting
2024/2025		Anticipated Start of Construction

3.0 COMMUNICATION METHODS

Effective communication is essential to the ongoing success of the project. Below is a description of the communication methods that are planned for the project. As the project progresses, public involvement will be assessed periodically to determine if the methods of communication in use are effective or if adjustments are needed.

3.1 *NHDOT Website*

A web page for the Wolfeboro 29615 project has been created on the NHDOT website and will be used to post pertinent project information, meeting agendas, and meeting summaries or notes. The web page can be accessed at the NHDOT's Project Information Center at <http://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/specifics.htm>. The purpose of the website is to keep the public informed about the project and provide another way for the public to provide input. The website content will be updated at project milestones and, as necessary, after project meetings.

3.2 *Town Website*

A link from the Town of Wolfeboro's website to the project's web page (<https://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/wolfeboro29615/index.htm>) on the NHDOT website will be provided.

3.3 *E-mail*

A primary method of communication for the PAC will be via e-mail. Individual e-mail addresses for the PAC members are contained within the project files. Meeting agendas, meeting notes, and other pertinent project information will be disseminated to the PAC via this method of communication.

3.4 *Meetings*

Project Advisory Committee meetings, Public Informational meetings, and Workshops will be used as different avenues to disseminate and discuss pertinent project related information.

3.5 *Media*

In order to help maximize the distribution of meeting notices for the Public Informational meetings, Public Hearing, news releases and/or meeting notices will be provided to local and regional newspapers.

➤ **Granite State News**

- **Publication Frequency:** weekly
- **Distribution:** Town/Region New Hampshire
- **Address:** 5 Water Street, Meredith, New Hampshire 03253
- **Phone:** (603) 279-4516
- **Fax:** (603) 279-3331
- **E-mail:** classifieds@salmonpress.news
- **Website:** <http://www.newhampshirerelakesandmountains.com/Site.Home.html>

➤ **Union Leader**

- **Publication Frequency:** daily
- **Distribution:** New Hampshire
- **Address:** 100 William Loeb Drive, Manchester, NH 03109

- **Phone:** (603) 668-4321
- **E-mail:** news@unionleader.com
- **Website:** <http://nh.mypublicnotices.com/PublicNotice.asp> and <https://www.unionleader.com/>

3.6 Social Media

Social Media has become the prime means for disseminating information to a large cross section of people. The NHDOT has a [Facebook](#) page and electronic newsletter that will be used to notify and inform the general public regarding project related information and to notify the public of upcoming meetings.

3.7 Newsletter

The size and schedule of the project will not necessitate the need for project newsletters. Presentations, graphics and plans prepared for the meetings will be posted to the project website.

3.8 U.S. Postal Service Notices to Abutters

The NHDOT will provide advance notice to the project abutters through the U.S. Postal Service when the Public Hearing will occur. The location, time and other details of the Public Hearing will be included in the notice.

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